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SUBJECT: MARCH 31 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: HACKING, NORTH KOREAN ROCKET,
AFGHANISTAN, TIBET

11. Key points at the March 31 MFA press briefing:

-- China "resolutely opposes the damaging of computer networks including through hacking."

-- "Relevant parties should stay calm, exercise restraint and do more to ensure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in East Asia."

-- Afghanistan is "at a cross-roads" and the international community should "take measures to promote reconstruction."

-- The "local government will decide" if Tibet is open to foreigners.

Computer Spying Allegations

12. China "resolutely opposes the damaging of computer networks including through hacking," said spokesperson Qin Gang at the March 31 regular MFA press conference. Some outside China are "bent on making fabrications." Switching to English, Qin said that there is a "cold war ghost" and a "cold war virus" outside of China that "attempt to tarnish China with lies." These lies are "doomed to fail." Asked whether China would investigate the reports of hacking, Qin said that he thought it was time to "track down" those who spread the "cold war virus."

North Korea

13. Asked about reported North Korean rocket launch preparations, Qin said that "relevant parties should stay calm, exercise restraint and do more to ensure peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in East Asia." China is "paying close attention" to the issue and will "stay in close contact" with relevant countries to promote the Six-Party Talks, said Qin. Asked about the 60th anniversary of relations between China and North Korea, Qin said that celebrations are aimed at "increasing mutual understanding." China and North Korea have a tradition of high-level exchanges and both countries will need to reach a decision regarding a potential visit of Prime Minister Wen Jiabao.

Afghanistan

14. Afghanistan is "at a cross-roads" and the international community should "take measures to promote reconstruction," said Qin. At The Hague, Vice Foreign Minister Wu Dawei will explain China's policy toward Afghanistan and "call on the international community to take action." China and Afghanistan are friendly neighbors and China will assist Afghanistan "within China's capacity." Asked what resources China would seek in Afghanistan, Qin said "Afghanistan's stability is the biggest resource."

Tibet

¶15. The "local government will decide" if Tibet is open to foreigners, said Qin. Foreigners who would like to go to Tibet should apply with the local government. Asked about the role of the Chinese government-supported Panchen Lama, Qin said that he is "a religious leader who loves the motherland." China "hopes he will contribute to the development of Tibet and play a role in maintaining the territorial integrity of the motherland." Regarding the Dalai Lama, Qin accused the "Dalai Clique" of "always lying and twisting facts."

Internet Censorship

¶16. "What you can see you can see and what you cannot see you cannot see" said Qin when asked about continued censorship of Internet site YouTube. China "administers the internet according to law," said Qin.

Relations with India

¶17. Qin said he was "surprised to see" media reports that India's military views China as a threat. Chinese and Indian leaders have "reached a consensus" that the two countries "do not pose a threat" to one another. China and India are "partners" and China would like to "promote bilateral ties."

Relations with Australia

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¶18. The Chinese government supports Chinese companies doing business with Australian companies "on the basis of mutual benefit," said Qin. This cooperation will "also benefit Australia."

Visit of Chavez to China

¶19. China "welcomes" Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez to visit China, but the spokesman did not have any information to announce.

Relations with France

¶10. The "development" of China-France relations is "the common aspiration of both peoples," said Qin. China hopes that France will respond to China's concerns in order to "bring relations back on track." China and France should "join hands in the face of the financial crisis" added Qin.

Travel/Visits

¶11. Prime Minister Wen Jiabao will attend the 12th China-ASEAN meeting, the 12th ASEAN, China, Korea and Japan meeting, the fourth Asia Summit and a breakfast meeting with leaders from Korea and Japan to be held in Thailand from the April 10-12. New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark will visit China from April 14-18. The Nepal Foreign Minister will visit China from April 4-10.

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